100% of Fast Food Samples Tested Positive for Heavy Metals, Lead, and Cadmium

POSTED BY ZEN HONEYCUTT 57GS ON OCTOBER 12, 2023

Moms Across America's Top Twenty Fast Food Testing Results

Moms Across America, an educational non profit, is announcing the heavy metal test results from the top twenty most popular fast food restaurants. The 42 samples were tested for arsenic, cadmium, lead, and mercury. 100% of the samples, which were purchased at 21 different locations nationwide, contained alarming levels of cadmium and lead.

Moms Across America initiated this testing because of growing concern for skyrocketing levels of mental health issues, violence, behavior and learning disorders, and autism in American children. Moms Across America's previous testing showed school lunches to be highly contaminated with agrochemicals and pollutants. Fast food companies are often the suppliers of school meals.

Moms Across America Founder, Zen Honeycutt states, *"Moms Across America is calling upon policy makers to support changes in farming practices, to regenerative organic, that can provide non toxic, nutrient dense food to every American child through school lunches. Our families require a higher standard of safety in fast food and the entire food supply. The security, success, and future of our country depends on the mental and physical health of our children."*

Summary

- 100% of the fast food samples tested contained alarming levels of cadmium.The levels of cadmium were between 74%-1158% higher than what the EPA allows in drinking water.
- Cadmium is highly carcinogenic and can cause toxic reactions even at low levels.
- In-and-Out french fries had 1,158% higher levels of cadmium than what the EPA allows in drinking water.
- Jack-in-the-Box french fries had 970% higher levels of cadmium than what the EPA allows in drinking water.
- 100% of the 42 fast food samples tested had trace amounts or higher of lead.
- Even low levels of lead in blood have been shown to negatively affect a child's intelligence, ability to pay attention, and academic achievement.
- A Sonic Drive-in cheeseburger had the highest amount of lead, 912% higher than what the EPA allows in drinking water.
- Arsenic was also detected in 17% of the fast food samples.
- The highest level of arsenic was found in Panda Express's orange chicken and white rice at 362% higher than EPA levels allowed in drinking water.

Cadmium

The highest level of cadmium was found in fast food french fries. This is presumably because potatoes are grown in the ground and absorb more heavy metals in the growth process. In-and-Out had 1,158% higher levels than what the EPA allows in drinking water, and Jack-in-the-Box had cadmium levels 970% higher than what the EPA allows in drinking water.

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According to a March 2023 paper by Wang et al. “Cadmium (Cd) is a highly carcinogenic metal, which can cause toxic reactions even at low concentrations. Long-term ingestion of high-dose Cd can cause serious health problems (Ankit et al., 2021).

The paper further explains how cadmium may be polluting food. “Application of sewage sludge, farmyard manure, or some commercial fertilizers may also increase Cd levels in the soil (Bigalke et al., 2017, Kubier et al.,)” The paper also points to reasons “such as dumping of domestic or industrial wastewater (Rao & Kashifuddin, 2016), and misuse of phosphate fertilizer.”

How could consistent exposure to heavy metals affect human health?

If you ingest contaminated food or water that contains cadmium, you may experience:

- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal pain and cramping
- Tenesmus: A sensation that you need to have a bowel movement, but you don't actually need to defecate

Exposure to cadmium can damage the kidneys. According to the American Kidney Foundation:

The kidneys are powerful chemical factories that perform the following functions:

- remove waste products from the body
- remove drugs from the body
- balance the body's fluids
- release hormones that regulate blood pressure
- produce an active form of vitamin D that promotes strong, healthy bones
- control the production of red blood cells

Lead

While many of the samples did not have levels of lead above the laboratory’s detection limit, 100% did have a trace amount or higher. The highest amount was 912% higher than what the EPA allows in drinking water, was in a Sonic Drive-in cheeseburger. Lead can accumulate in livestock through contaminated animal feeds such as grain, hay, or grass contaminated with lead from fertilizers.

A CNN Health article states “*It’s a mantra repeated by doctors all over the world:**There is no safe amount of lead***.” Lead poisoning side effects in children include developmental delays, learning difficulties, irritability, loss of appetite, weight loss, sluggishness and fatigue, abdominal pain, vomiting, constipation and hearing loss.

Additionally, according to the CDC, exposure to lead can seriously harm a child’s health and cause well-documented adverse effects such as:

- Damage to the brain and nervous system
- Slowed growth and development
- Learning and behavior problems
- Hearing and speech problems

This can cause:

- Lower IQ
- Decreased ability to pay attention
- Underperformance in school

There is also evidence that childhood exposure to lead can cause long-term harm.

Exposure to lead can lead to life long debilitating effects.

According to the Mayo Clinic:

“Lead poisoning occurs when lead builds up in the body, often over months or years. Even small amounts of lead can cause serious health problems. Children younger than 6 years are especially vulnerable to lead poisoning, which can severely affect mental and physical development. At very high levels, lead poisoning can be fatal.”

According to non profit’s As You Sow research;

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"Lead and cadmium accumulate in the body over time, increasing the total body burden of these heavy metals over decades. Ingesting even small amounts of these metals will add to existing body burdens and should be avoided."

Arsenic

Arsenic was also detected in 17% of the fast food samples, with the highest level found in Panda Express's orange chicken and white rice at 362% higher than EPA levels allowed in drinking water. Arsenic has been detected in chicken feed at such high levels that hazmat licenses may be required to transport the grains. Arsenic is often used as a pesticide, used on rice, and can be found in manure used for fertilizer.

According to a paper by Abdul et al, called Arsenic and Human Health Effects, A Review: *"Arsenic has been associated with persuading a variety of complications in body organ systems: integumentary, nervous, respiratory, cardiovascular, hematopoietic, immune, endocrine, hepatic, renal, reproductive system and development. Arsenic has been able to induce epigenetic changes (in utero) and genetic mutations (a leading cause of cancer) in the body."*

Signs of arsenic ingestion may present as:

- drowsiness
- headaches
- confusion
- severe diarrhea

Proponents of fast food may suggest that the levels of heavy metals detected in the food were low and of no concern. However, compared to the EPA's allowable levels of heavy metals in drinking water, we might agree that these levels are deeply concerning.

Full Lab Report of Heavy Metal Data Analysis

EPA limits for heavy metals in water

Arsenic	0.010 mg/L2 - or **10 ppb**	Skin damage or problems with circulatory systems, and may have increased risk of getting cancer
Cadmium	.005 mg/L 2 or **5 ppb**	Kidney damage
Lead	.015mg/L 2 or **15 ppb**	Infants and children: Delays in physical or mental development; children could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults: Kidney problems; high blood pressure
Mercury	.002mg/L 2 or **2 ppb**	Kidney damage

We Can Reduce Heavy Metals in Food

The primary source for heavy metals in food is likely the fertilizer inputs. Proponents of regenerative organic agriculture assert that farming in this manner can reduce inputs. Therefore, one could surmise that reducing fertilizers would reduce the levels of heavy metals in the soil.

"When you start farming regeneratively, you rely a lot less on external inputs, such as fertilizers..." – Tom Tolputt

(Photo by Andrew McGuire, WSU)

From a Washington State University article: "*The key principle of most definitions of regenerative agriculture is the integration of livestock into cropping systems. The grazed livestock component of regenerative agriculture allows for several advantages that annual cropping cannot give, including improved soil health. It also reduces the need for nutrient inputs through a series of system changes that start with reduced exports. Livestock grazing is the source of regenerative agriculture's reduction in nutrient input needs.*"

Moms Across America recommends the Rodale Institute and Regenerative Organic Certified for further education regarding regenerative organic agriculture, the movie Common Ground by Josh and Rebecca Tickell, which is in theaters now, and connecting with your neighbors to grow your own by starting a Neighborhood Food Network.

A Safer School Lunch Congressional Briefing will be held on Oct 17, 2023, SH 902 in Washington D.C. Zen Honeycutt, Founder of Moms Across America, will present on the invited panel with a pediatrician, toxicologist, regenerative organic farmer, and researcher.

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Moms Across America is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to educate and empower mothers and others with actions and solutions to create healthy communities.

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T Stroh commented 1 month ago

In the upper right corner of the data sheet it shows the “low risk” reference levels. No food is above the low risk threshold which leads me to believe that this shouldn’t be too alarming here and we’re not taking that big of a risk eating these foods. What am I missing?

Morgan Farmer commented 1 month ago

Hi! Can you post the results of the study? I would like to see the levels for each fast food restaurant.

Aj Lavender commented 1 month ago

So... where are the results? You know... pertinent data?

Zen Honeycutt commented 1 month ago

No, Lisa, we did not test for aluminum, we hope to do so in the future.

Lisa McLaughlin commented 1 month ago

Weather modification planes spray aluminum, cadmium, barium, and ice nucleation chemicals over us all the time. Did you check for aluminum? I know they are trying to do a gmo seed that grows in soil with high aluminum content...

Beth Almeida commented 2 months ago

What I don’t understand is WHERE the thought process came from that all of these chemicals needed to be dumped into our food. I understand that a lot of the things present are everywhere and can’t be avoided, but when it comes to the FOOD SUPPLY, there should be a MUCH bigger effort to get them out of the food supply. For example, running a quick search online, I found that
Brominated Vegetable Oil (BVO), Olestra., Potassium Bromate.
Butylated Hydroxyanisole (BHA) / Butylated Hydroxytoluene (BHT)
Color Dyes (Yellow No. 5, No. 6, Red No. were all present in the food we eat in this country but are banned everywhere else. I also found this bit, which really made me angry,
"Of the 374 active ingredients authorized for agricultural use in the U.S. in 2016, the European Union banned 72 of them."
My question is WHY does anybody on this planet think they have ANY right to poison my family, to cause the trouble that is caused from ingesting the products (like hormone imbalance and ADHD) just because they are too lazy to do a work at a real job and do hard things like actually approach the safety they claim to be aiming for when they make decisions?

Zen Honeycutt published this page in **Blog** 2 months ago

About Us

Moms Across America is a 501c3 nonprofit organization with national networks, reaching millions of people every month, working to create healthy communities. Our international sister project, Mothers Across the World collaborates with many countries around the world to create healthy countries.

Our website is available in English, Spanish, and Japanese.

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